MDR Tracking Number: M5-04-1434-01

Under the provisions of Section 413.031 of the Texas Workers' Compensation Act, Title 5, Subtitle A of the Texas Labor Code, effective June 17, 2001 and Commission Rule 133.305 titled Medical Dispute Resolution - General and 133.308 titled Medical Dispute Resolution by Independent Review Organizations, the Medical Review Division (Division) assigned an IRO to conduct a review of the disputed medical necessity issues between the requestor and the respondent. The dispute was received on January 22, 2004.

The Medical Review Division has reviewed the IRO decision and determined that **the requestor prevailed** on the issues of medical necessity. Therefore, upon receipt of this Order and in accordance with §133.308(r)(9), the Commission hereby orders the respondent and non-prevailing party to **refund the requestor $650.00** for the paid IRO fee. For the purposes of determining compliance with the order, the Commission will add 20 days to the date the order was deemed received as outlined on page one of this order.

In accordance with §413.031(e), it is a defense for the carrier if the carrier timely complies with the IRO decision.

Based on review of the disputed issues within the request, the Medical Review Division has determined that **medical necessity was the only issue** to be resolved. The office visits, therapeutic exercises, range of motion measurements, MT-physical performance test, muscle testing, and FC-functional capacity evaluation were found to be medically necessary. The respondent raised no other reasons for denying reimbursement for the above listed services.

This findings and decision is hereby issued this 2nd day of April 2004.

Patricia Rodriguez
Medical Dispute Resolution Officer
Medical Review Division

On this basis, and pursuant to §§402.042, 413.016, 413.031, and 413.019 of the Act, the Medical Review Division hereby ORDERS the respondent to pay the unpaid medical fees in accordance with the fair and reasonable rate as set forth in Commission Rule 133.1(a)(8) plus all accrued interest due at the time of payment to the requestor within 20 days of receipt of this order. This Order is applicable to dates of service 05/08/03 through 07/14/03 in this dispute.

The respondent is prohibited from asserting additional denial reasons relative to this Decision upon issuing payment to the requestor in accordance with this Order (Rule 133.307(j)(2)).

This Order is hereby issued this 2nd day of April 2004.

Roy Lewis, Supervisor
Medical Dispute Resolution
Medical Review Division

RL/pr

March 31, 2004

NOTICE OF INDEPENDENT REVIEW DECISION

RE: MDR Tracking #: M5-04-1434-01

___ has been certified by the Texas Department of Insurance (TDI) as an independent review organization (IRO). ___ IRO Certificate Number is 5348. Texas Worker's Compensation Commission (TWCC) Rule §133.308 allows for a claimant or provider to request an independent review of a Carrier's adverse medical necessity determination. TWCC assigned the above-reference case to ___ for independent review in accordance with this Rule.

___ has performed an independent review of the proposed care to determine whether or not the adverse determination was appropriate. Relevant medical records, documentation provided by the parties referenced above and other documentation and written information submitted regarding this appeal was reviewed during the performance of this independent review.

This case was reviewed by a practicing physician on the ___ external review panel. The reviewer has met the requirements for the ADL of TWCC or has been approved as an exception to the ADL requirement. This physician is board certified in physical medicine and rehabilitation. The ___ physician reviewer signed a statement certifying that no known conflicts of interest exist between this physician and any of the treating physicians or providers or any of the physicians or providers who reviewed this case for a determination prior to the referral to ___ for independent review. In addition, the ___ physician reviewer certified that the review was performed without bias for or against any party in this case.

Clinical History
This case concerns a 35 year-old female who sustained a work related injury on ___. The diagnosis for this patient was left carpal tunnel syndrome. The patient was initially treated with therapy from 4/30/02 through 6/24/02 and oral medications. A left wrist x-ray dated 5/8/02 indicated a lunate bone cyst. On 6/24/02 and 8/2/02 the patient underwent nerve conduction studies. On 3/25/03 the patient underwent left carpal tunnel release, decompression of the medial nerve, neurolysis of the medical nerve. Beginning 4/21/03 the patient was treated with postoperative therapy that included therapeutic exercises, range of motion, and therapeutic procedures.

Requested Services
Office visit, therapeutic exercise, range of motion measurements, MT-physical performance test, muscle testing, FC-functional capacity evaluation from 5/8/03 through 7/14/03.

Decision
The Carrier's determination that these services were not medically necessary for the treatment of this patient's condition is overturned.

Rationale/Basis for Decision
The ___ physician reviewer noted that this case concerns a 35 year-old female who sustained a work related injury to her left wrist on ___. The ___ physician reviewer indicated that the patient underwent left carpal tunnel release on 3/25/03 and restarted therapy for left wrist range of motion/strengthening.

The ___ physician reviewer noted that between 5/8/03 and 7/14/03, therapy was provided to improve range of motion in the left wrist, improve strength of the left wrist and hand, and to decrease pain. The ___ physician reviewer indicated that the patient had steady improvement in range of motion in the left wrist and was nearly normal by 7/11/03 (from 23% to 50% on 5/8/03). The ___ physician reviewer noted that the patient also had improvement in strength. The ___ physician reviewer also noted that the patient underwent a functional capacity evaluation on 7/11/03 and was recommended to return to work. The ___ physician reviewer explained that the treatment rendered this patient between 5/8/03 through 7/14/03 was medically necessary to treat this patient's decreased range of motion and strength in her left wrist. The ___ physician reviewer also explained that the functional capacity evaluation was necessary to determine a date for this patient to return to work. Therefore, the ___ physician consultant concluded that the office visit, therapeutic exercise, range of motion measurements, MT-physical performance test, muscle testing, FC-functional capacity evaluation from 5/8/03 through 7/14/03 were medically necessary to treat this patient's condition.

Sincerely,